

Obstinacy

ing upon them, slaughtering and slaying until they whined⁷²⁷ for mercy, like their own vile curs.

Indulging such moods as these, I was one day unbound and ordered to perform some menial office. Previously, however, I had determined in my heart to kill at least one or more of them the first opportunity that offered, partly to gratify my vengeance, but more especially actuated by the hope that in the melee, prompted by sudden wrath, they would dispatch me at once and save me from a lingering death at the stake. When, therefore, the cords were unfastened and I stood erect with free limbs, instead of obeying the command, I seized the first thing within my reach, [415] which happened to be a wooden pothook, and hurled it at an Indian with all my strength. Well was it for him [522] that it missed its aim. Instantly I was surrounded and borne down, but instead of producing the effect intended, the unexpected assault convulsed them with laughter. The next day, and the next; and every few days thereafter, I was unloosed and directed to skin a deer, or bring wood or water, they taking special care, in the meantime, to keep all dangerous weapons out of my reach and a sufficient number about me to prevent serious mischief. But I refused, absolutely and defiantly. On occasions, also, at this period, when the watch was brought out, I would not touch it. The life I was leading had become so inconceivably irksome—they were such a filthy and cruel race—the disgusting camp so “smelled to heaven”—everything about me was so hopeless and so wretched that I became utterly reckless, longing only to shake off, I cared not how, at length, the heavy nightmare of existence. If, therefore, I had previously feigned the character of a humble and devout missionary with some degree of success, I now played the part of an obstinate jackass to absolute perfection. [515] [364]

Three Years Among the Comanches

- 439 The buffalo robe is the principal, and indeed, so far as I know, their only article of commerce—their only source of wealth. At a certain season every year they are transported to the confines of Mexico, and sold to parties of Mexican traders who annually meet them there, and receive in compensation hatchets, knives, and such other implements as are used by them, together with cheap calicoes, mescal, and a great variety of trinkets.
- 291 It has previously been stated that the men dress in buckskin. The women do likewise, to a great extent, but most of them wear a sort of short gown made of the calico thus obtained. Children, until they arrive at the age of eight or nine, do not take the trouble to dress in anything.
- 515 In their personal habits they are supremely nasty. Occasionally, in warm weather, they bathe in the river, but daily ablutions are not thought of, so that they are constantly covered with dirt and vermin.
- 582 The institution of marriage is recognized, and governed by established laws. When a young man becomes enamored and resolves to take a wife, he presents himself before the council and makes known his desire. If there are no objections on the part of the maiden or her parents, the council decrees that they may live together in the matrimonial relation one moon. If, at the end of that time, there has arisen no dissension between them, and they are mutually satisfied, they are permitted to continue the relation another moon, and if they live together harmoniously through that, the knot is irrevocably tied. The system of matrimony among them, therefore, seems to be founded on the principle of the rule of three.
- 764 Equally peculiar is their mode of burial. When a warrior dies, his body is carried out and laid upon the ground, his head always toward the west. A pen is then built up around

796 dancers, but this was rarely the case since the buffalo were older men of
535 established reputation while the dancers were usually young.

796 Early on this same morning the wives of the dancers, or, if they were
535 unmarried, any of their close female relatives, made beds for them in the
513 screened alcove at the western side of the lodge. These beds consisted of
346 heaps of sage with robes over them. A large rounded heap of moist sand
was also built. When the dancers were exhausted they would retire behind
the screen and throw themselves upon this so that they would be revived
by its dampness and coolness. After the beds had been made and the sand
heap built no one was allowed behind the screen except the medicine man
and the actual dancers.

796 The crier warned everyone who wished to attend the dance to bathe
535 that morning. The dancers also bathed. This was a common preliminary
783 to seeking to establish relations with the supernatural, as when a man was
● 515 going to a medicine man's grave to get power from his ghost. It was a form
of purification or consecration, although in this case it was not attended by
any ceremony.

796 After the noon meal the people went into the lodge and the dance began.
535 The drummers, old men who also led in the singing, seated themselves near
the door or about the fire place. Unfortunately, the location of the fire place
[535] in the lodge was not ascertained. They had a large circular drum or drums
of the sort used in ordinary dances. These drums were beaten by several
men simultaneously. They also carried rattles which apparently could be
of any sort. The spectators, both men and women, seated themselves
around the sides of the lodge three or four deep.

796 While the audience and orchestra were taking their places, the dancers
535 went behind the screen with the medicine man and painted themselves.
302 Often they helped to paint each other. This painting seems to have been
rather varied. In the ceremony in which the roofless lodge was used all the
dancers painted solid yellow. In that with the closed lodge each dancer was
painted differently and there was a variety of colors and designs. All in-
formants agreed that, although the paint was renewed each morning of the
ceremony, each man wore the same designs throughout. The dancers were
[293] stripped to breech clout and moccasins and carried no paraphernalia except
their eagle bone whistles. None of these were seen, but they are described
as identical with those used by other Plains tribes in the Sun Dance.

796 They were usually eight to twelve dancers. When they first emerged
535 from behind the screen they danced with their arms stretched toward the
sun, but as they became exhausted they dropped their arms and merely
moved their shoulders with a shrugging motion, stamping, at the same

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which time she takes no food, except a little broth 841
and some kind of vegetables; but on no account 262
will she taste of meat of any kind until her four
days are expired; after that, she bathes herself and
returns to her husband.

As to cleanliness in their persons, I think them 515
the most particular people I ever saw. They bathe
at all seasons of the year. I have frequently seen
them, both men and women, break the ice for this
purpose; and they are punctilious not to eat with-
out washing. I never knew one of them to rise and
go abroad without washing. They are very par-
ticular in the above respect with regard to their
children; they are also far from being as indiffer-
ent to the kind and preparation of their food, as
one might suppose. The men eat horse-flesh when 262
they can get nothing else; but their women, as a
general thing, will not taste of it, nor will they per-
mit it to come near their dwellings. They subsist
mostly upon buffalo meat, with some other game,
which they cook, in a cleanly manner, with various
kinds of vegetables, some of which possess some-
what of the quality, and they have the faculty of
preparing it as a good substitute for bread.

In conclusion, perhaps I ought to say, that with 727
reference to a point, of all others of the most sacred
importance to a captive female, (with gratitude
to my Maker I record it.) my fears were in no part
realized.

Query. - Is it not strange, indeed, that a nation 500

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which has been presented and the material still to be presented that Sanapia is very aware of the psychological factor in illness and the necessity of treating psychological as well as physiological symptoms in a patient. 756
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Treatment of Ghost Sickness

Immediately after this first interview, Sanapia instructs the patient to bathe in the stream which flows west of her house and to change his clothes. The actual treatment will begin after sunrise on the day following the first interview. Between this time and the time of the initiation of treatment, the patient is treated as a guest of Sanapia's household. During this time Sanapia sharpens her first diagnosis by a more thorough examination of the patient. Continual bathing is the only activity which is required of the patient. Since Sanapia will have to apply her mouth to the patient in her doctoring, she instructs him to wash often so he will be as clean as possible when Sanapia begins treatment. The notion of the magical effect of water is also probably present, though Sanapia never directly alluded to this. 775
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Sanapia will doctor her patient three times daily for a period of two days. The treatment will be given at sunrise, midday, and sunset. By the morning of the third day the patient should be cured. Sanapia then blesses him, and the patient is dismissed. If, by the morning of the third day, the patient is not well, Sanapia continues her doctoring through another series of six treatments. After four days if the patient shows no sign of improvement, Sanapia will concede that she has failed in her attempts to cure her patient and will suggest either that he go to the white doctors in Lawton to obtain any comfort which they can supply or that he resign himself to his impending death. However, Sanapia states that even if she knows that her patient is going to die, she will usually not tell him because, as she says, "I can't stand to look at them when I have to say that to them. It makes me feel just so bad that I can't do it." Sanapia's ability to foretell the death of a patient is not solely based on her developed skills at prognosticating from the individual's physical condition. She states that she hears a voice which tells her that absolutely nothing can be done to save her patient. 775
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I hear, "He's dead right now, he's dead right now." And I know they going to die. I know that part too. They would get up and sit up and talk and walk. Well, they eat their food and drink water and they feel good. But I know that's the last meal they going to have. That's the last drink they going to have.

Before sunrise on the day that she will begin treatment and before she awakens her patient, Sanapia selects and prepares the medicines she will use. She then ties them in a cloth bundle, for she will take them with her when she, accompanied by her patient, goes to make her prayers with the rising sun. She then awakens her patient, prepares his breakfast, and takes him to a secluded place on a small knoll south of her house. It is still dark when they walk to the selected place of prayer. Sanapia sits facing east with her patient beside her. She 775
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775 several in each hand and taps the patient's face. This is felt to transfer the positive
755 qualities of these stones—firmness and stability—to the patient's face.
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Intercession of the Medicine Eagle

775 If the patient is still not improved after the peyote meeting, Sanapia will
755 move to her ultimate level of doctoring intensity by attempting to call her Medicine
756 eagle to her assistance through the intercession of the spirits of her mother and
778 maternal uncle. This step is not taken at the beginning of treatment because of
778 the dangers involved with the presence of so great an amount of supernatural
power. It is possible that she might kill her patient by exposing him to this burst
[761] of supernatural energy. Also, Sanapia forestalls calling her ultimate powers into
play because of her feeling that the physical reactions which this powerful pres-
ence produces in her will ultimately cause her death.

On the second day, if she has decided to follow this course of action, she
refrains from her sunrise and midday doctoring. The patient spends the day
resting and drinking great quantities of peyote and *bekwinatsu* "tea." Sanapia
passes the daylight hours alone in some secluded area preparing herself for the
traumatic activities in which she will be engaged after sunset.

I set somewhere out there away from peoples . . . be by myself. I don't do
nothing but sit and think about things. Like what my mother told me about
things, and what my uncle told me. Think about all the years I come along and
how up to today I'm still living. I don't do anything different from what I do if
I am sitting anywhere by myself . . . just thinking about them things.

• [513] Immediately before sunset Sanapia goes to the stream which flows near
[358] her house and washes her hands and face before returning to her house. Any
small children or infants who happen to be members of the household at this
time are taken to spend the night with relatives in a nearby town, so they need
not be exposed to the potential dangers of the night's doctoring activities. Sanapia
firmly instructs her patient that he must do whatever she requests of him during
the coming night. If he reacts slowly to her commands, he could die. Once again,
this instruction is given in recognition of the dangers of supernatural power.

775 The night's doctoring follows the basic pattern of the first two treatments
755 of the first day; however, this last treatment of the second day will continue
756 throughout the night and will contain the crucial element of Sanapia's singing of
778 her Medicine song. Sometime late in the night when Sanapia feels the proper
778 inspiration, she begins to sing her song. She will sing it over and over again until
533 the spirits she is calling come to her. The first singing of the song takes place
with her patient as she fans him with her Medicine feather. She then leaves the
house and continues her singing as she sits alone in the dark.

Sanapia first sees the spirits of her mother and uncle as two lights burn-
ing on the crest of a hill approximately a hundred yards south of her house. They
slowly approach her. The rapidity of their approach corresponds to the intensity
of Sanapia's singing, for it is her song which is drawing them to her. They